

# Conversation Contents

## Weekly Report to the Secretary - July 6, 2017

### Attachments:

/22. Weekly Report to the Secretary - July 6, 2017/1.1 WeeklyReporttotheSecretary07-06-17.docx

**"Rees, Gareth" <gareth\_rees@ios.doi.gov>**

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**From:** "Rees, Gareth" <gareth\_rees@ios.doi.gov>  
**Sent:** Thu Jul 06 2017 13:53:48 GMT-0600 (MDT)  
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**To:**  
**Subject:** Weekly Report to the Secretary - July 6, 2017  
**Attachments:** WeeklyReporttotheSecretary07-06-17.docx

Good Afternoon All,

Please find attached the weekly report to the Secretary. I have attached both the word and Google Doc versions of the reports. If there are any issues, please let me know.

Thanks

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Gareth C. Rees

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 **Weekly Report to the Secretary 07-06-17**

**WEEKLY REPORT TO THE SECRETARY  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**July 06, 2017**

**Office of the Solicitor**

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## **Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Acting Assistant Secretary Virginia Johnson will travel with Secretary Zinke to Colonial National Historic Park on July 7 to tour the park and to participate in a roundtable on Boating Infrastructure Grants in Yorktown, Virginia.

On July 8-14, Deputy Assistant Secretary Aurelia Skipwith will travel to Vail, Colorado, to attend the Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies meeting. She will be meeting with 23 Western Directors of Fish & Game to engage about local issues and policies. She will then tour Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho and Montana to become familiar with wildlife and habitat management, as well as interstate and federal cooperation in the West. On July 17, she will tour the Lee Metcalf Wildlife Refuge in Montana and July 18-20 attend Governor Butch Otter's Natural Resources & Land Management Trail Ride.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee is currently holding its annual session in Krakow, Poland from July 2-12. Casey Hammond is part of the delegation and is representing the Department of the Interior. UNESCO lists sites in the USA and other countries as "World Heritage Sites." They are added to an international directory and the designation greatly augments visitation, especially from international visitors. FWP is monitoring third-party efforts to place Chaco Culture National Historic Park in New Mexico on UNESCO's "Endangered List" due to its proximity to current and proposed oil and gas activity in the vicinity. If placed on the "Endangered List," this could augment the efforts of the international environmental community to launch public relations campaign against our oil and gas activity in the region. Several career employees from the Department of State are participating in the session along with one career NPS employee. Casey has advised that Earthjustice is present at the conference and is raising concerns about the impact the Administration's national monuments review could have on another World Heritage Site, the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in Hawaii. If added to the "Endangered List," this could adversely impact commercial fishing in the region.

Acting Assistant Secretary Virginia Johnson has been working closely with the U.S. Navy to resolve an issue at Camp Pendleton related to the Park Service's historic preservation responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. In 2012, the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) submitted the nomination of Trestles Historic District to the Navy to list it on National Register of Historic Places. Trestles is part of San Onofre State Beach, which the Navy at Camp Pendleton leases to the State. The state's nomination is based on the historic significance of the beach to the California surfing culture. The US Marine Corps has historically conducted amphibious landing and other training exercises in this area. The Navy has not approved the State's request to list Trestles. The State appealed the Navy's decision to the NPS. We are working with the Solicitor's office to assist the NPS in rendering a decision that reflects the views and priorities of the Administration. The NPS is reviewing the latest appeal and is expected to render a decision by July 28.

## **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

From July 7-11, FWS Acting Director Greg Sheehan will be attending the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 2017 Annual Conference in Vail, Colorado.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

As soon as possible, FWS will announce it has apportioned \$50 million to state fish and wildlife agencies for developing and implementing programs that benefit wildlife and their habitats. The funding is provided through the Service's State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program and is distributed through an apportionment formula in accordance with the Appropriations Act. These funds have been approved by the FWS Acting Director and by DOI for disbursement and are presently being made available to the states. FWS has a communication strategy but is concerned that news of the disbursement could leak from the recipients prior to public outreach being conducted. The Service will reach key members of Congress, states, tribes, partners, non-government organizations and media interested in wildlife and natural resource conservation through congressional notifications and media outreach via a national news release and accompanying social media.

FWS biologists are among the authors of a paper expected to publish in coming weeks that examines polar bear attacks since 1870 to see if there are commonalities between the attacks. Researchers found that most attacks occurred in human-populated communities. If sea-ice loss continues, polar bears are likely to come on shore more frequently and for longer periods of time, increasing the risk of human-polar bear conflicts. No outreach is planned. Talking points, however, are being prepared.

In coming weeks, in conjunction with NOAA and EPA, FWS plans to publish the *Coastal Wetlands Loss Analysis: Summary Findings of Pilot Studies Conducted by the Interagency Coastal Wetlands Workgroup*. FWS assisted in developing the report, which summarizes wetland loss assessments conducted in four coastal U.S. watersheds. The report was developed to support subsequent policy and management actions designed to decrease net wetland loss in coastal areas. It is not controversial. Stakeholders include NOAA and EPA, local, state and federal government organizations, and NGOs. The report will be made available online, on EPA's website, and disseminated to limited stakeholder groups primarily composed of representatives from government agencies with the purview to support coastal wetland conservation and restoration. No media outreach is planned by FWS.

On July 8, Representative Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) will attend Discover Ottawa Day at Ottawa NWR. This is a public event and the congresswoman will make remarks during a portion of the event.

On July 10, the Thunder Basin National Grasslands Prairie Ecosystem Association (TBGPEA) will host a celebration for the completion of the TBGPEA Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances, integrated Candidate Conservation Agreement and Conservation Agreement

for sage-steppe and short-grass prairie species. Wyoming Governor Matt Meade as well as state, federal and local partners will attend the celebration to be held at the Nagle-Warren Mansion in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Tyler Abbott, FWS Wyoming Field Supervisor, will attend. FWS will issue a regional news release.

On July 10, Representative Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) is hosting a public event in suburban Cleveland to discuss Great Lakes issues. Kaptur is inviting several experts to sit on a panel to answer audience questions about Great Lakes ecological issues. FWS Midwest Deputy Regional Director Charlie Wooley will participate to answer questions about Asian carp. Other groups represented will include NOAA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and two or three NGOs.

On or around July 10, FWS will announce more than \$3.8 million in grants matched by more than \$14 million in partner contributions going to 31 collaborative conservation projects in 19 countries across the Americas as part of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grant program. News release and outreach to bird-centric media are planned. This is not controversial.

On July 11, FWS will host a state-tribe American Ginseng Program coordination meeting in Morgantown, West Virginia. American ginseng is a native plant extensively harvested for its roots for export to Asia where they are highly valued for their medicinal properties. Due to the high volume of international trade of wild ginseng, the species is included in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Appendix II allows trade that is biologically sustainable and legal. The meeting will bring together the state and tribe ginseng program coordinators to discuss pressing current issues facing wild ginseng, management efforts, and necessary steps to improve the long-term sustainability of ginseng.

On or around July 14, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a notice announcing a six-month extension of the final determination of whether to list the San Fernando Valley spineflower, a plant species from southern California, as a result of substantial scientific disagreement concerning the species. This notice will also reopen the comment period on the proposed rule to list the species for an additional 30 days. The spineflower listing is locally controversial, but filing a six-month extension is not expected to be controversial. Interested parties include The City of Calabasas and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (the petitioners), Wild Earth Guardians (MDL Settlement Agreement), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the State of California. Outreach will include stakeholder notifications and posting of notice to field office newsroom. On or around August 11, FWS will announce the availability of a draft Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA) for public comment that outlines conservation measures to benefit the San Fernando Valley spineflower. The CCA was prepared in collaboration with Newhall Land and Farming Company. Interested stakeholder is Newhall Ranch. Outreach will include stakeholder notifications and posting of notice to field office newsroom.

On or around July 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* its annual proposal for administering tribal hunting, fishing and gathering rights under multiple treaties for several federally recognized tribes in the Great Lakes region. The proposal has been compiled in consultation with the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, which represents 11

tribes in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. FWS has informed the Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan DNRs of the proposal. A final decision will not be made until after public comments are reviewed and would not take effect until the fall 2017 hunting season. The proposal is expected to be controversial due to the inclusion of several new techniques for tribal members to take waterfowl, including electronic calls, hand held nets and snares, and use of these nets at night. Outreach to state and tribal leaders is planned.

By July 15, FWS plans to announce about \$1 million in white-nose syndrome grants to states. The grants will help states respond to the deadly white-nose syndrome disease of bats through actions such as looking for the fungus that causes the disease, carrying out decontamination procedures at state caves and mines, and monitoring bat populations. White-nose syndrome is a disease caused by a fungus that has killed millions of valuable insect-eating bats and has been found in 31 states. Recent studies have shown that the agricultural value of insect control by bats is \$1.4 billion annually in Texas alone. FWS leads the national response to the disease. This action is not controversial. A news release and outreach to interested stakeholders is planned – we will coordinate with AFWA and/or state wildlife directors.

### **Hot Topics**

On June 9, four dead cattle were found adjacent to a wetland on Lostwood National Wildlife Refuge in North Dakota. The cattle belonged to a cooperator permitted to graze on the refuge for grassland management purposes. Laboratory tests were positive for blue-green algae toxin. All grazing cooperators and neighboring ranchers were notified of the risk and asked to report sick animals immediately. Since 2014, refuge staff has been working with FWS's Wildlife Health Office and the North Dakota Department of Health on water quality sampling. No proactive outreach is planned. We are prepared to respond to any media inquiries.

FWS is monitoring the 32,500-acre Frye Fire in the Pinaleno Mountains of southeastern Arizona. As of June 29, the fire has burned through much of the remaining habitat of the endangered Mount Graham red squirrel. This species occurs only on this sky island mountain and its population was estimated to be only 252 animals in fall 2016. The fire is 43 percent contained. Fire operations are ongoing. Threatened Mexican spotted owls, Apache and Gila trout, and Wet Canyon talussnail (conservation agreement species) also occur in the affected area.

On March 29, 2017, the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals reversed and remanded a ruling from the District Court of Utah, Central Division regarding Utah prairie dogs. Once a court mandate is issued, FWS will again have the regulatory responsibility for prairie dogs on private and other non-federal lands, and there will be a need to issue incidental take permits for development activities that may take prairie dogs or its habitat. FWS implemented two low-effects Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) in Iron and Garfield counties that included incidental take provisions for development. These low-effect HCPs have expired. A HCP remains in place in Iron County until July 2018. FWS is working with the state and other parties on a General Conservation Plan (GCP) to provide incidental take for development across the species' range for the next 10 years. A GCP is a streamlined HCP process whereby FWS prepares the conservation plan, completes National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, and issues permits to individual developers or landowners (i.e., applicants). FWS anticipates completing the GCP this calendar

year and prior to expiration of the Iron County HCP.

On or around July 19, FWS expects to complete the consultation and biological opinion for the Department of the Navy for the Marines' relocation to Guam and its impact on endangered species. The consultation is being conducted as required by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The final biological opinion is potentially controversial as the consultation is being closely monitored by environmental groups in Guam, Hawaii and the mainland for an action that is extremely important for the Pacific Area national security focus. No outreach is being planned by FWS at this time.

On June 28, Minnesota DNR hosted a public meeting to discuss trails. Local ATV advocates want a new section of trail to be built, across lands that are owned by FWS but managed by the Minnesota DNR. Both FWS and the DNR have concerns about the ecological damage that would be done by opening this closed section of trail for ATVs. It is also parallel to another route that is already open to ATVs. Because of the lease agreement between FWS and the DNR, both parties must agree to any new trails on these lands. The DNR will likely begin a public stakeholder process to determine if they want to submit a formal proposal for the ATV trail to FWS. Representative Collin Peterson (D-MN) has taken a personal interest in opening this section of trail for ATVs, and his staff have been in contact with FWS staff. This is locally controversial.

## **National Park Service**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Nothing to report.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

The Federal Interagency Panel (Panel) for World Heritage has recommended to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks that the "Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks," consisting of Hopewell Culture National Historical Park in Ohio and several related sites owned by the State of Ohio, be authorized to prepare a World Heritage nomination. This recommendation is pending review by the Assistant Secretary's office. If approved, it would authorize publication of a Federal Register notice of the decision, as well as notification to property owners and Congressional committees. The preparation of a nomination would be done under the guidance of the National Park Service Office of International Affairs, and is likely to take a minimum of a year. When completed, the nomination would be reviewed again by the Panel, NPS, and the Assistant Secretary before a decision is made to submit it to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, which makes the final decision on World Heritage nominations after a thorough review of their own. This approval package is being routed through DTS for surname.

On July 7, the Secretary will announce the \$1.75 million in available Maritime Heritage project grant funding. These grants will be used for maritime heritage education and preservation projects related to the maritime heritage of the United States. The National Maritime Heritage Act established the National Maritime Heritage Grants Program within the Department of the

Interior. The grants program is administered in partnership with the Maritime Administration. It provides funding for education and preservation projects designed to preserve historic maritime resources and is funded through a percentage of the proceeds from the sale or scrapping of obsolete vessels of the National Defense Reserve Fleet. All grants awarded must be matched on a 1-to-1 basis with non-Federal assets.

On or about July 9, Golden Gate National Recreation Area is scheduled to host the Honorable Rick Colless, Member of the Legislative Council in New South Wales, Australia, who serves as the Parliamentary Secretary for Natural Resources. He is visiting as part of a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association study tour to the U.S. and Canada, and he has expressed specific interest in northern California and Yellowstone. They are interested in visits to national forests and parks and meetings with industry stakeholders to discuss forest and park management, natural resource management, conservation, and commercial logging policies and practices.

On July 11, the NPS will meet with representatives of the Sitka Tribe of Alaska to begin negotiations regarding the Tribe's proposal for compacting certain NPS functions at the park. A pre-negotiation meeting regarding the request was held in late May. The Tribe is seeking to manage maintenance and interpretation & education functions in the park in FY-18.

On July 15, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg will visit Glacier National Park. He will tour the park with the Superintendent and USGS scientist Dan Fagre (Director of the Climate Change in Mountain Ecosystems Project). He will also visit with Gracie the Bark Ranger and official park partners. Zuckerberg will post to Facebook immediately following his visit to his 92 million followers.

On July 15, the NPS anticipates the announcement of \$15 million in Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership grant funding for approximately 25 projects. A total of 51 projects were submitted by states to acquire and develop outdoor recreation spaces. This competitive program supplements the annual Land and Water Conservation Fund apportionment to states by supporting projects for disadvantaged populations in urban areas. The NPS is coordinating with DOI Communications on the public announcement and notification to the recipients

On July 16, The Healing Church in Rhode Island will hold a ceremony at Roger Williams National Memorial pending approval of their special use permit application. The use of cannabis is a part of this ceremony. As per legal advice, the NPS will issue a permit to conduct a legal First Amendment assembly. The permit will not allow for illegal activities or use of federally recognized illegal substances. Should illegal activities occur, Providence PD will manage enforcement activities.

On or about July 17, the FY 16 Annual Report on the Economic Impact of the Federal Historic Tax Credit is expected to be issued. The report finds that the \$6.5 billion of private investment in historic rehabilitation for FY16 produced an estimated 109,000 jobs and benefited the national economy with over \$12.3 billion in output, \$6.2 billion in GDP, and \$1.7 billion in taxes generated. The report was undertaken by the NPS through a cooperative agreement with the Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research and documents the wide breadth of economic impacts of the credit, as well as the cumulative impacts of the program since the

program's inception in 1976 -- \$131.8 billion in leveraged private investment in the historic rehabilitation, over 42,000 certified projects, and over 2.44 million jobs. Commonly known as the Historic Tax Credit, the program provides a 20-percent federal tax credit to property owners who undertake a substantial rehabilitation of a historic building in a business or income-producing use, while maintaining its historic character. The program is administered by the NPS and the Internal Revenue Service, in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Offices. The NPS certifies that a historic building is eligible for the program and that its rehabilitation meets preservation standards.

## **Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs and the Bureaus of Indian Affairs and Indian Education**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On July 7, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold a field hearing in Santa Fe, New Mexico on Native American Art and Crafts authentic crafts and fraudulent crafts.

July 10 is the new deadline for public comments for the Bears Ears National Monument, and the deadline for comments on all other monument designations under review.

On July 12, a Senate Committee on Indian Affairs hearing on S.943, Johnson-O'Malley Supplemental Indian Education Program Modernization Act is scheduled. An invitation for a Departmental witness is expected.

On July 13, DAS-PED Clarkson presents to the entire membership of the Inter-Tribal Five Civilized Tribes Quarterly Meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on updating the Indian Trade and Commerce Regulations.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

On July 5, a press release announcing Dr. Gavin Clarkson as the newly appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Economic Development for Indian Affairs will be sent to media, federally recognized Tribes, and Tribal organizations.

July 10 is the target publication date for the 2017 proposed Indian irrigation rate notice in the Federal Register. Timely publication is important for the country to include in bills to landowners and irrigators.

July 13 is the launch date for the new [indianaffairs.gov](http://indianaffairs.gov) website.

## **Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Nothing to report.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

During the week of July 10, OSMRE anticipates publishing a Notice of Availability in a local newspaper for the Bridger Mine Mining Plan Modification Draft EA, initiating a 30-day comment period. The Bridger Coal Company's Bridger Mine is an underground mine located in Sweetwater County, WY that employs 540 people. If the modification is approved, production is estimated to be 2.24 million tons per year.

During the week of July 10, OSMRE plans to publish a Notice of Availability in a local newspaper for the Cordero Rojo Mine Mining Plan Modification Draft EA, initiating a 30-day public comment period. Cloud Peak Energy's Cordero Rojo Mine is a surface mine located in Campbell County, WY. The mine employs 383 people and produces approximately 20 million tons of coal per year.

On July 10, the BLM's public comment period for the National Monument review closes. The BLM-WO is reviewing public comments and, in coordination with State Offices, Monument Managers, and the DOI Office of Policy Analysis, will prepare the final report on the 18 National Monuments managed by the BLM. This will be ongoing through July and early August.

On July 10, the BLM-CO White River Field Office will initiate a 30-day public scoping period for a proposal to develop a 384-mile off-highway vehicle (OHV) route system incorporating mostly existing BLM and county roads. Rio Blanco County submitted the Wagon Wheel West OHV Trail proposal to the BLM to increase trail system-based recreation throughout the county and northwestern Colorado. Recreation on BLM-CO-managed lands generated \$543 million and supported 4,625 jobs in FY 2015.

On July 10, BOEM plans to publish the Record of Decision for a project to rehabilitate 4 miles of shoreline damaged by Hurricane Matthew in Martin County, FL. The Bureau will enter into a 3-party agreement with Martin County and the US Army Corps of Engineers to dredge up to 1,000,000 cubic yards of OCS sand.

On July 10, four individuals charged with various crimes during the 2014 Gold Butte cattle impoundment are scheduled to be re-tried in U.S. District Court, Las Vegas, following the declaration of a mistrial on April 24, 2017. The BLM communications team has and will continue to coordinate with DOI communications on public statements or related materials.

On July 10, BSEE Director Scott Angelle will meet with the Gulf Restoration Network in New Orleans, LA.

On July 10, BSEE Director Scott Angelle will meet with the representatives of PHI Helicopters in Houston, TX to discuss issues related to the Bureau's use of offshore helicopter refueling facilities.

On July 11, BSEE Director Scott Angelle is scheduled to speak at the American Petroleum Institute's Safe Lifting Conference in Houston, TX. The conference will cover lifting operations and standards for platform-based cranes.

On July 11-12, BOEM will participate in a panel discussion on marine acoustics and other topics with ocean science leaders hosted by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Bill Brown, Chief of the Office of Environmental Programs, Jill Lewandowski, Chief of the Division of Environmental Assessment, and Erica Staaterman, a Bioacoustician from BOEM, will represent the Bureau in the panel discussion.

On July 12, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources plans to hold a hearing on the offshore oil and gas programs. Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Kate MacGregor will be the Department's witness.

On July 12, BSEE Director Scott Angelle is scheduled to meet with offshore industry representatives in Morgan City, LA. Director Angelle will also meet with BSEE Houma District personnel.

On July 13, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining tentatively plans to hold a hearing on 12 public land bills of interest to the BLM. The BLM witness has yet to be determined.

On July 13, BLM-WY High Plains District, Buffalo Field Office, and Casper Field Office staff will meet with Converse and Campbell County commissioners to discuss coal and oil and gas conflicts, which occur when both industries compete for mineral rights in the same location, within their respective counties. The meeting will initiate dialogue on how the BLM and county commissioners can help the industries carry out their work in accordance with the BLM's relevant land use plan.

On July 14, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands tentatively plans to hold a hearing on various public land bills, including the following two of interest to BLM; H.R. 2582, Confirming State Land Grants for Education Act (Rep. Love, R-4-UT); and H.R. 1547, Udall Park Land Exchange Completion Act (Rep. McSally, R-2-AZ). The BLM's witness is yet to be determined.

On July 14, BSEE Director Scott Angelle will speak at a meeting of the National Ocean Industries Association's Legislative Strategy Group in Washington, DC.

From July 14 to August 25, BLM-AK plans a temporary shutdown of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System. Alyeska Pipeline Services Company plans safety and integrity protection system downloads requiring short-term shutdowns for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System this summer. The BLM Alaska Branch of Pipeline Monitoring will observe the shutdowns.

In mid-July, BOEM plans to release a Note to Stakeholders regarding its proposal to implement a 12.5% royalty rate for oil and gas production in shallow water depths. The reduction would be only for leases offered in Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 249, which is scheduled to take place on August 16, 2017. Bids for leasing in shallow waters have been in steady decline, primarily due to the high incidents of natural gas in shallow water depths, which compete unfavorably with more onshore gas resource plays. If ASLM approves the proposal, the BOEM will make the announcement using a Note to Stakeholders. Affected governors will be notified via correspondence.

In mid-July, OSMRE's Western Region plans to publish a Notice of Availability in a local newspaper for the John Henry Mine Mining Plan Modification draft EA and unsigned FONSI, initiating a 30-day public comment period. Pacific Coast Coal Company's John Henry Mine is a surface mine located in King County, WA which has been inactive since 1999.

In mid to late July, BLM-CA anticipates the completion of the proposed Hester land exchange. The exchange will result in the BLM's acquisition of approximately 550 acres of non-Federal lands within the new Sand to Snow National Monument in Riverside County, in exchange for 40 acres of Federal mineral interests located on private property in San Diego County. The exchange finalizes restitution of a trespass settlement that began in 2013. Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA-5) has been a strong advocate for the exchange and the BLM is keeping him informed of its progress.

## **Assistant Secretary Policy, Management and Budget**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

- Who: Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC), Bureau of Reclamation (BR), US Geological Survey (USGS), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National Park Service (NPS), Office of the Regional Solicitor, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Forest Service
- What: Columbia River Treaty (CRT) Regional Federal Resource Agency Partners Meeting
- When: July 11, 2017
- Where: Portland, OR
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Updates on recent meetings and work related to the review of the CRT.
  
- Who: OEPC, FWS, BOR, NPS, Office of the Solicitor (SOL), EPA, USDA, NOAA
- What: Columbia River Treaty (CRT) National Federal Resource Agency Partners
- When: July 11 or 12, 2017
- Where: Washington, DC
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Updates with Federal HQ staff on updates and recent meetings and work related to the review of the CRT.
  
- Who: Coordinator Jon Andrew and new Coordinator Brent Range
- What: Interagency Coordination Meetings
- When: July 11-12, 2017
- Where: San Diego, CA
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Jon and Brent will attend coordination meetings with Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Border Patrol field personnel in the San Diego area. They will also attend the San Diego Sector Borderlands Management Task Force Meeting on July 11.
  
- Who: OEPC Portland, BIA, BR, FWS, NPS, USGS, EPA, NOAA Fisheries, USFS, and Columbia Basin Tribes
- What: Columbia Basin Small Workgroup Meeting
- When: July 17, 2017
- Where: Portland, OR
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Updates on recent meetings and work related to modeling and coordination for the Columbia River hydropower system.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

**FY 2019 Budget Formulation.** The Office of Budget will hold meetings July 11-13 with Bureaus and DOI Leadership on the Bureau FY 2019 Budget submissions to the Department.

**Royalty Policy Committee.** ONRR issued a Federal Register Notice to extend the nomination period for the Royalty Policy Committee (Committee) by an additional 30 days. On April 3, 2017, the Department of the Interior published a notice establishing the Committee and requesting nominations. The last submission date for Committee nominations was extended to July 3, 2017. The selection committee will meet July 19, 2017, to review the nominations.

**Suspension and Debarment Actions.** On June 9, 2017, DOI debarred Sharon Ann Baldwin. This action is based on Baldwin's conviction for theft of \$313,000 in park entrance fees while employed by the National Park Service (NPS) as a Supervisory Visitor Use Assistant at the Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona.

**Year 2017 Small Business Accomplishments to Date.** As of June 27, 2017, the Department has awarded 55.29% of its contract award dollars to small businesses. The Department-wide small business goal, which was negotiated with the Small Business Administration, is 53.5%. The Department awarded 21.89% of its contract award dollars to small disadvantaged businesses and 13.83% of its contract award dollars to women-owned small businesses, exceeding the statutory goal of 5% for each. The Department awarded 3.58% of its contract award dollars to historically underutilized business zone small businesses and 3.87% of its contract award dollars to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. The statutory goal is 3% for each of these categories.

**Internal Control and Audit Follow-up.** The Department has an annual goal of closing 85 percent of corrective actions scheduled for closure in the current FY to address issues raised in OIG and GAO engagements. As of June 30, 2017, the Department has closed 40 percent of open audit recommendations scheduled for closure in FY 2017.

## **Assistant Secretary for Water and Science**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

For July 10-14, 2017, Acting AS/WS Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings. He will also be orienting the new DAS for Water and Science, and starting the transition to his permanent role as the Principal DAS in PMB.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

In the coming weeks, the Department will release a new USGS report on critical minerals for the United States. This publication presents resource and geologic information for 23 mineral commodities currently viewed as important to our national economy and national security, many of which are sourced entirely outside of the United States. The report provides an in-depth look at each commodity's use, distribution of deposit types, and current status of production, resources, and reserves. The individual commodity chapters serve as an update to the 1973 commodity chapters of USGS Professional Paper 820, United States Mineral Resources. A DOI news release is planned, along with release of a possible Executive Order and FY 2019 budget initiative on 3DEEP geologic mapping to promote mining in the US.

## **30-60 DAY LOOK-AHEAD**

### **Office of the Solicitor**

#### **SIGNIFICANT LITIGATION DEADLINES FOR NEXT THREE WEEKS SEPARATELY REPORTED**

### **Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks**

On August 28, federal agencies will begin selling the new America the Beautiful Senior Pass which allows lifetime access to certain federal lands. The new price for the Lifetime Senior Pass will be \$80; the annual senior pass will be \$20. The current lifetime senior pass is \$10. The NPS issued written guidance to the parks and federal recreational land managers last week instructing them to place orders for new cards no later than close of business on July 7. This change impacts NPS, FWS, BLM, Bureau of Reclamation, USACE, and the US Forest Service. The implementation date will be August 28 to allow sufficient time for training, printing, and fulfillment of existing orders. NPS will announce the effective date on July 10.

### **U.S. Fish And Wildlife Service**

#### **Grants**

Pending Departmental advisement, FWS will approve a slate of projects for funding under the Competitive State Wildlife Grants program. The projects focus on “species of greatest conservation need” identified in State Wildlife Action Plans. Funds for this program are appropriated annually by Congress. FWS Regional Offices will submit individual grants for DOI approval prior to award. This is not controversial. No outreach is planned.

#### **Asian Carp**

On June 22, a silver carp was caught below O’Brien Lock and Dam, 8 miles from Lake Michigan. This is the first Asian carp found above the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Electric Fish Dispersal Barrier (~34 miles to the south) since 2010. This dam is the last barrier before the lake itself, heightening concerns that this highly invasive Asian carp species could find its way into the Great Lakes. It is important to note that this preliminary finding does not confirm that a reproducing population of Asian carp currently exists above the electric dispersal barriers or within the Great Lakes. In eight consecutive years of intensive monitoring and fish sampling in the Chicago Area Waterway System, this is the second time a bighead or silver carp has been found above the electric dispersal barriers. A bighead carp was found in Lake Calumet in 2010.

#### **Endangered Species Act Recovery Actions**

FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a notice of availability of the revised draft recovery plan for the giant garter snake in California. The cost of certain actions pertaining to habitat acquisition, restoration and management is listed as “To be decided,” reflecting the considerable uncertainty around what the actual cost of those actions will be once completed. Stakeholders

include federal and state agencies, conservation organizations, local agricultural communities and local municipalities as it concerns water usage. This action is not expected to be controversial, although the estimated costs of voluntary actions and actions needed for recovery could generate local stakeholder and media attention. Planned outreach includes early notifications to stakeholders, news release to local media and postings to website and social media. This is pending clearance by the Department.

On July 19-20, FWS will host public scoping meetings in Central Oregon to gather information to prepare a draft environmental impact statement related to the Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan. The Deschutes Basin Board of Control and the City of Prineville are the permit applicants for the incidental take of three listed species: Oregon spotted frog, bull trout and steelhead. Media are expected. Stakeholders include local farmers, irrigators, and recreationists. WaterWatch of Oregon, Center for Biological Diversity, Coalition for the Deschutes, Trout Unlimited and the Deschutes River Conservancy will likely get involved in the NEPA process. This will be regionally controversial. Necessary outreach is planned to alert the public to the meetings. There will be a news release, social media posts and outreach to local and state representatives. Phone calls will be made and emails sent to the partners already listed in the report item. The meetings are just the first step in the scoping process, so there will be follow-up outreach with interested partners after the meetings.

FWS continues seeking review and comment until August 29 on the peer-reviewed Mexican wolf draft recovery plan from local, state and federal agencies, tribes and the public in both the United States and Mexico during the public comment period. There is a high level of visibility and controversy on Mexican wolf recovery in general. To gain additional comments and feedback, FWS is hosting public meetings in Arizona and New Mexico on the updated Mexican wolf recovery plan between July 18 and July 22.

On or around August 4, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a notice of availability of a draft post-delisting monitoring plan and reopen the public comment period on the proposed rule to delist the black-capped vireo. The post-delisting monitoring plan will be finalized in concert with the decision on the final delisting rule in January 2018. This action may become controversial. Stakeholders include the petitioners, Pacific Legal Foundation, the Office of Travis Co. Judge, Big Bend National Park and others. There have been a number of public comments opposing the delisting of the black-capped vireo, and a number of partner agencies concerned about having the necessary funds to implement the ongoing management needs (cowbird removal) and monitoring identified for their lands, which may also result in concerns about the viability of both the delisting and the post-delisting monitoring plan. Planned outreach will include notifications to local stakeholders, a press release to local media and social media posts.

### **Endangered Species Act Listing/Delisting Actions**

Pending a decision by the Acting Director and clearance by the Department, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final listing determination for the i'iwi, a Hawaiian bird. This action is not controversial. The only interested stakeholder groups are the petitioners, Center for Biological Diversity and Life Net. FWS is required by settlement agreement to submit the

finding for the i'iwi to the Federal Register by September 20. Outreach is planned to Hawaiian media and to national conservation and bird-centric media.

On or around July 19, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a notice reopening for public comment the proposed listing of western glacier stonefly and meltwater lednian stonefly, located in Montana and Wyoming, as threatened species. The reopening will allow the public to comment on new range information regarding western glacier stonefly. This action is not expected to be controversial. Interested stakeholders include WildEarth Guardians and the States of Montana and Wyoming. A regional news release is planned.

On or around August 1, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a notice designating critical habitat for three plant species on Hawaii Island and correct the maps for existing designations for an additional four species there. We intend to exclude lands owned or managed by the Queen Liliuokalani Trust, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands and other private landowners under Section 4(b)(2) of the Act. This action is not controversial. Interested stakeholders include the State of Hawaii and multiple state agencies, the County of Hawaii and various private landowners. Outreach includes a news release, social media, emails and phone calls to Congressional offices and stakeholders mentioned above.

On or around August 2, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* 90-day petition findings for six species: the oblong rocksnail, sicklefin chub, sturgeon chub, tricolored bat and Venus flytrap. We are publishing a correction to the 90-day finding for leopards which clarifies the range and the entity we are evaluating in our status review. The findings in this batch are not expected to be controversial; however, the substantial 90-day finding for the tricolored bat might generate attention, given that the primary threat to it is white-nosed syndrome (which is threatening other bat species across North America). Stakeholders for the tricolored bat include the wind, oil and gas industries, federal forest land managers (Department of Defense, Forest Service, National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management), private forest landowners, States, Canada and Mexico, federal academic researchers (U.S. Geological Survey and universities), the caving community, and local municipalities and homeowners who have bats on their property. Stakeholders for the other species include the Center for Biological Diversity, Cahaba River Keeper, WildEarth Guardians, Defenders of Wildlife, the Humane Society, International Fund for Animal Welfare, the Fund for Animals and several individuals. Outreach will include notifications to stakeholders and petitioners and a low-key national news bulletin to media.

On or around August 4, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a 12-month finding and proposed delisting determination on the Deseret milkvetch, found in Utah. The Service concluded that the threats (residential development, highway widening, livestock grazing, and small population size) either have not occurred to the extent anticipated, are being adequately managed, or the species is more tolerant of the stressor than originally known. Interested stakeholders include the petitioner, Western Area Power Administration, entities that own lands occupied by the species, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and Utah Division of Transportation. Planned outreach will include a regional news release, emailing the news release to relevant congressional offices and phone calls to the respective state wildlife directors. This is not expected to garner national attention.

On or around August 5, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to list the Louisiana pine snake, located in Louisiana and Texas, as a threatened species with a 4(d) rule. This action is controversial. Stakeholders include the U.S. Army, the U.S. Forest Service, State and private landowners and the timber industry. Planned outreach will include notifications to stakeholders and relevant members of Congress, press release to local media and social media posts.

On or around August 14, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a notice of availability of the final Stock Assessment Report (SAR) for the southern sea otter population in California. We do not anticipate controversy on publication of availability for this report. No outreach is planned.

On or around August 15, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a final rule to remove the eastern cougar (historically known to exist in southeastern Ontario, southern Quebec and New Brunswick in Canada and a region bounded from Maine to Michigan, Illinois, Kentucky and South Carolina in the eastern United States) from the list of endangered and threatened species due to extinction. Although we do not anticipate major public controversy with regard to the final rule, opposition to our conclusion of extinction may be expressed by advocates and advocacy organizations for puma and large predator conservation who maintain that eastern cougars still exist. However, the best available information indicates that sightings of cougars in the east are cases of mistaken identity (with bobcats) or escaped captive animals or, rarely, cougars from western populations dispersing eastwards. Interested parties include eastern U.S. states, the Humane Society of the United States, the Animal Legal Defense Fund and the Cougar Network. National news bulletin and Congressional emails are planned.

### **National Wildlife Refuge Actions**

In August, FWS will publish a proposed rule and open a 30-day public comment period on the 2017-18 Refuge-Specific Hunting and Sport Fishing Regulations. The proposed rule would open various national wildlife refuges to hunting and/or sport fishing for the first time (new hunts) and expand hunting and fishing opportunities at others. Outreach is planned to include a national news release when the *Federal Register* notice is published and notifications to members of Congress in affected districts, with some stakeholder outreach.

### **Migratory Bird Management Actions**

Pending Departmental clearance, FWS plans to announce new regulations that will allow the sale, including consignment sale, of authentic Alaska Native handicrafts or clothing that incorporate nonedible migratory bird parts. Handicrafts must be made from migratory birds harvested for food during the subsistence season. There are 27 bird species from which parts may be used. Outreach is planned to include a regional news release and stakeholder outreach. This is not controversial.

Pending Departmental clearance, in July, FWS will deliver to the *Federal Register*, a final rule establishing the 2017-18 hunting seasons and bag limits for certain migratory game birds to fulfill our responsibilities to the four international conventions to protect and manage migratory

game birds. We annually prescribe frameworks, or outer limits, for dates and times when hunting may occur and the number of birds that may be taken and possessed in hunting seasons. It sets hunting seasons, hours, areas and limits for migratory game bird species. This final rule is the culmination of the rulemaking process for the migratory game bird hunting seasons, which started with the June 10, 2016, proposed rule. Interested stakeholders include the Flyway Councils, state wildlife agencies, non-governmental organizations and hunters. A prepared statement will be provided on our website with a link to the proposed rule. This is not controversial.

Pending Departmental clearance, in July, FWS will deliver to the *Federal Register*, a proposal to establish annual hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds for the 2018-19 hunting season to fulfill our responsibilities to the four international conventions to protect and manage migratory game birds. We annually prescribe outside limits (frameworks) within which states may select hunting seasons. This proposed rule provides the regulatory schedule, announces the Service Migratory Bird Regulations Committee (SRC) and Flyway Council meetings, describes the proposed regulatory alternatives for the 2018-19 duck hunting seasons and requests proposals from Indian tribes that wish to establish special migratory game bird hunting regulations on Federal Indian reservations and ceded lands. A prepared statement will be provided on our website with a link to the proposed rule. This is not controversial.

Pending Departmental clearance, in July, FWS will deliver to the *Federal Register*, a proposal to approve the shot for hunting waterfowl and coots. We have concluded that this type of shot left in the terrestrial or aquatic environments is unlikely to adversely affect fish, wildlife, or their habitats. Approving this shot formulation would increase the nontoxic shot options for hunters. Interested stakeholders include the Flyway Councils, state wildlife agencies, non-governmental organizations and hunters. A prepared statement will be provided on our website with a link to the proposed rule. This is not controversial.

## **Energy**

On or around July 17, FWS plans to send to the *Federal Register* a notice seeking public input to identify potential issues, concerns, impacts and alternatives to be considered in development of either an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement for a proposed General Conservation Plan for oil and gas activities in Santa Barbara County, California. This action is not expected to be controversial. Interested stakeholders are oil and gas operators and environmental organizations in Santa Barbara County, California. Outreach will be targeted to Santa Barbara County area media, congressional staff and stakeholders. FWS will offer a briefing with staff from the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Environmental Office in advance of *Federal Register* notification of public comment period.

## **Other**

On July 20, in Prior Lake, Minnesota, FWS will host a consultation for any federally recognized tribes to discuss an FWS proposal to change the way permits are distributed for the possession of eagle feathers and eagle parts for Native American religious purposes. This is part of a nationwide effort to host face-to-face consultations before moving forward with any proposed changes

to eagle possession permits.

On August 3, FWS Acting Director Sheehan is invited to present at the U.S. Postal Service's Protect Pollinators First-Day-of-Issue Stamp Ceremony. The ceremony will take place at the American Philatelic Society Stamp Show in Richmond, Virginia. The stamps pay tribute to the beauty and importance of pollinators with stamps depicting two of our continent's most iconic: the monarch butterfly and the western honeybee, each shown industriously pollinating a variety of plants native to North America. The Postal Service has the lead on communications for their event. FWS will be working with them as the event draws near.

## **National Park Service**

In July, the NPS will announce the award of \$18 million in Centennial Challenge projects. Many of the projects accomplish deferred maintenance projects, and all represent public-private partnerships, since each project requires a minimum 50/50 match with non-federal funds. The NPS is coordinating with DOI Communications on the public announcement and notification to the recipients.

In July, the NPS will announce the apportionment of \$1,635,742 in Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act grants to fund repatriation and reburial projects. The grants will assist in consultation, documentation, and repatriation of ancestors and sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and funerary objects back to Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. Enacted in 1990, NAGPRA requires museums and Federal agencies to inventory and identify Native American human remains and cultural items in their collections, and to consult with Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages, and Native Hawaiian organizations regarding repatriation. Section 10 of the Act authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to award grants to assist in implementing provisions of the Act. The NPS will coordinate with DOI Communications on the public announcement and notification to the recipients

In July, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park fire assessment review will be released. In February, a team of fire experts (federal and state) convened at Great Smoky Mountains National Park to conduct an independent review of the 2016 Chimney Tops 2 fire that started in the park on November 23. The purpose of the review is to assess the facts leading up to and during the Chimney Tops 2 fire within the boundaries of the park, as well as make recommendations on any planning, operational, or managerial issues which can be addressed locally, regionally, and/or nationally to reduce the chances of a similar incident in the future. The NPS has received tort claims related to this incident and expects additional lawsuits soon.

In July, the NPS will announce \$21 million in grants from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to States and Territories. Grants will be awarded to 59 State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), based on the amounts available under Consolidated Appropriations Act 115-31. SHPO grants receive minor press coverage when the awards are announced. Several SHPOs have contacted the NPS about their inability to meet payroll because of the late appropriation.

In July, the NPS will announce \$4.5 million in grants from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to Indian Tribes. Grants will be awarded to 169 Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs),

based on the amounts available under Consolidated Appropriations Act PL115-31. THPO grants receive minor press coverage when the awards are announced. Several THPOs have contacted us about inability to meet payroll because of the late appropriation.

In July, the NPS anticipates the announcement of \$500,000 in Tribal Heritage grants from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to Indian Tribes. Grants will be awarded to 14 Tribes, based on the amounts available under Consolidated Appropriations Act PL 115-31 and reappropriated funding from PL 114-113. Tribal Heritage grants receive press coverage when the awards are announced.

On July 18, the NPS will hold public meetings in Flagstaff, Arizona, seeking public input into the replacement of the Grand Canyon National Park's 12.5 mile long Trans-canyon Pipeline that conveys water from Roaring Springs located below the North Rim to the Indian Gardens Pump Station at the South Rim. This essential component of Grand Canyon's infrastructure is 44 years old, putting it well past its normal life expectancy. The pipeline is the sole source of water supporting park operations on the South Rim, providing all drinking and utility water for more than 4.7 million annual visitors and 2,500 year-round residents.

In mid-July, the National Mall and Memorial Parks will drain the pond in Constitution Gardens for cleaning and maintenance. It is expected to be empty for approximately a week. Work will not commence until after the July 4th holiday. Neither of these projects is related to the recent draining of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool because of elevated parasite levels.

In mid-July, Mojave National Preserve will begin a 60-day public comment period on the Water Resources Plan and draft Environmental Impact Statement (WRP/DEIS). The plan will manage both developed (diverted springs and wildlife guzzlers) and undeveloped water resources in the park. The process is being closely watched by local hunting groups interested in the management of wildlife guzzlers (large basins which catch rainwater and provide a watering source for wildlife and cattle), which are viewed as necessary to maintaining a healthy bighorn sheep population for hunting.

During the week of July 24, the Reconstruction Era National Monument will hold three open house sessions in St. Helena Island, Port Royal, and Beaufort, South Carolina, as part of the development of a foundation document for this new park. A focused stakeholder meeting will also be held in Beaufort to identify the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the National Park Service in setting up these new areas and also provide input into the development of the foundation document and interpretive themes.

In late July, George Washington Parkway will begin the work to clean, wax, and re-gild the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial, commonly referred to as the Iwo Jima Memorial. Visitor access will be affected. During this period, there will be no vehicle access to the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial. The NPS is coordinating with Arlington County to block off a few parking spaces along Meade Street (county road immediately adjacent to the Memorial) as a pick-up and drop-off zone. Pedestrians will be able to access the Memorial by accessible trail from Meade Street. The project includes engraving *Iraq* and *Afghanistan* on the memorial to honor those who served. The park will notify stakeholders of the project's potential impacts. The project was

made possible by a donation from philanthropist David Rubenstein.

On July 29, the Frederick County Landmarks Foundation will host a National Historic Landmark (NHL) plaque dedication ceremony at the newly designated Schifferstadt House in Frederick, Md. The National Park Service (NPS) will supply the NHL plaque, and an NPS representative will make brief remarks. Local, state, and national elected officials are invited. Guest speakers will include Maryland Senator Ron Young and a descendant of the family that owned the property in the 18th century.

From July 29 to August 6, the 49th Annual Citi Open Tennis Tournament will occur at the Rock Creek Park Tennis Center. This event is a major activity of the Washington Tennis and Education Foundation, a park partner. The park will administer the permit under an Incident Command structure working closely with the Tennis Foundation, their contractors, USPP and other DC government agencies. There has been extensive coordination with Ward 4 City Council Member, Brandon Todd.

On August 18, Olympic National Park will host a special event at Hurricane Ridge celebrating the renaming of the Olympic Wilderness to the Daniel J. Evans Wilderness by a 2016 act of Congress. Evans, a former Washington state governor and U.S. Senator, was the lead sponsor of the Washington Park Wilderness Act of 1988. Evans will speak at the event and various Congressional members and/or staff are expected to among the estimated 150 participants. The NPS is working on a communications plan and will coordinate with the DOI Communications Office.

### **Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs and the Bureaus of Indian Affairs and Indian Education**

July 15 is the deadline for comments on E.O 13871, how Interior and the Federal government can be reorganized.

On July 19, a Senate Committee on Indian Affairs hearing oversight hearing on Indian Gaming is scheduled.

On July 19-20, the Self-Governance Advisory Committee quarterly meeting will place at the Embassy Suites DC Convention Center, 900 10th St NW, Washington, DC 20001. The Acting Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs is invited to attend on Thursday, July 20.

On July 24, the Department's Office of Policy Analysis will hold an Indian Economic Development Data workshop preceding the Tribal-Interior Budget Council meeting, at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort, 22181 Resort Blvd., Flagstaff, AZ.

On July 25-27, The Tribal-Interior Budget Council (TIBC) will meet at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort, 22181 Resort Blvd., Flagstaff, AZ.

On July 26, a Senate Committee on Indian Affairs oversight hearing on "Human Trafficking" is scheduled.

August 12 is the deadline for proposals from Tribes for the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development's (IEED's) FY 2017 Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) economic development feasibility study grant program. This grant program has, among other successes, enabled the Citizen Potawatomi Nation to build an industrial park and restore a 66-mile rail line that opens an east-west connection to four major north-south rail corridors for regional commerce.

### **Items of Note/Expected Legislative, Legal, Policy Issues**

#### ***Regulations Ready for OS Review***

- None at this time.

#### ***Regulations Pending Departmental Review, Then Ready for AS-IA Signature***

- **Proposed rules pending publication:**
  - **Indian Electric Power Utilities (25 CFR 175):** This proposed rule would not make any substantive changes to the regulations, but would revise the regulations to be in plain language. The regulations affect only a limited number of Tribes because there are only three BIA electric power utilities: Colorado River (serving the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation), Mission Valley Power (serving the Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Flathead Indian Reservation), and San Carlos Irrigation Project (serving Gila River Indian Community).
    - *Status:* The proposed rule will be presented to the AS-IA transition contact in preparation for AS-IA signature.

#### ***Upcoming FACA Committee Notices***

- **BIE Negotiated Rulemaking on Accountability (25 CFR 30):** The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires BIE to use a negotiated rulemaking process to develop regulations for implementation no later than the 2017-2018 academic year and to define the standards, assessments, and accountability system consistent with Section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for the schools funded by BIE on a national, regional, or tribal basis.
  - *Status:* [No Change] BIE is preparing a new notice of intent to establish the committee and solicitation for membership.

### **Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management**

On July 17, BOEM plans to publish the Final Notice of Sale and Record of Decision for the Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 249. The sale is scheduled for August 16 and will be the first lease sale under the 2017-2022 OCS Oil & Gas Program as well as the first region-wide sale.

During the week of July 17, BSEE Director Scott Angelle will attend individual meetings with Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Sen. Dan Sullivan, and Rep. Don Young of the Alaska Congressional delegation to discuss offshore developing in the Arctic OCS region.

On July 18 – 20, Acting ASLM Kate MacGregor will participate in the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Governor's Trail Ride hosted by the Idaho Cattle Association and Idaho Governor Butch Otter. The event, which will take place on historic ranchland in the Upper Snake River Valley, is designed to provide an opportunity to explore natural resource issues and will include discussions about improvements to the Federal grazing permit process and sustainable land use.

On July 18 and 25, BLM-Eastern States, in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service, will hold public meetings in St. Paul, MN, and Virginia, MN, to solicit comments regarding the proposed 20-year withdrawal of 234,328 acres of Federal minerals from national forest system lands on the Superior National Forest within the Rainy River Watershed. Public comments received during project scoping will inform development of an EIS to study the proposed mineral withdrawal. The USFS is the lead agency for developing the EIS, and the BLM is a cooperating agency. BLM Northeastern States District Manager Dean Gettinger will attend.

On July 19, BLM plans to hold an auction of Federally-owned crude helium. Under the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013, the BLM must offer for auction and sale annually a portion of the helium reserves stored underground at the Cliffside Gas Field, near Amarillo, TX. The BLM anticipates auctioning 500 MMcf in a total of 30 lots for delivery in FY 2018. Following the auction, the BLM will offer an allocated sale in which helium is offered to refiners, and a non-allocated sale in which the helium is offered to non-refiners.

On July 19, OSMRE, USFWS, and State regulatory authorities will meet in St. Louis to re-initiate Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act, as a result of the nullification of the Stream Protection Rule and the 2016 Biological Opinion. An internal draft of the Biological Assessment (BA) is under review by an interdisciplinary team and is expected to be completed, including all OSMRE and Solicitor reviews, by July 14, to allow the BA to be submitted to USFWS by the first week of August.

On July 21, BOEM will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Final Supplemental EIS for the Cape Wind Project. The EIS will supplement the 2009 Final EIS and is being prepared pursuant to a remand order from the D.C. Circuit Court. The NOA of the Record of Decision must publish prior to the court hearing scheduled on August 25.

On July 22, the BLM-OR/WA Lakeview Resource Area plans to hold an open house to discuss ongoing work with a private, non-profit partner to develop a multi-prong approach to managing the Beatty Butte Herd Management Area. For the first time, an external partner will work with BLM staff to bait trap horses, administer PZP to mares, and gentle horses considered good candidates for adoption.

On July 26, BOEM plans to hold a meeting with New Jersey fishing groups, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and the USACE Philadelphia and New York District Offices in Tom's River, NJ. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss how BOEM identifies and leases OCS sand resources and its efforts to study potential dredging impacts on fish habitats and

fisheries. This is a follow up to a January 2017 meeting hosted by NJDEP with eight fisheries groups.

On July 28, BOEM plans to publish the Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS for the Development and Production Plan for the Hilcorp Liberty Project. The Liberty Project is a 9-acre man-made gravel island proposed to be constructed approximately 5.6 miles offshore in the Beaufort Sea that would be capable of facilitating both drilling and processing operations.

In late July or early August, BOEM plans to publish a final rule to address the use of OCS sand, gravel, and shell resources for shore protection, beach restoration, and coastal wetlands restoration projects by Federal, state, and local government agencies for construction projects authorized by or funded in whole or part by the Federal Government. The rule will describe the negotiated noncompetitive agreement process and codify new and existing procedures.

On July 28, the BLM anticipates publishing proposed revisions to the Waste Prevention Rule in the Federal Register.

On July 30 – August 4, BLM-AK and BOEM will host acting Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals Kate MacGregor. The tentative itinerary involves tours on Alaska's North Slope, including the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System Pump Station 1, ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc. Alpine processing facility, Northstar Island offshore oil production facility, and overflight of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, as well as tours and briefings on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, the legacy well program, and the BLM Alaska Fire Service.

In early August, OSMRE's Western Region plans to submit the Dry Fork Mine (WY) Mining Plan decision documents to OSMRE headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Western Fuels' Dry Fork mine is a surface mining complex located in Campbell County, WY that employs 82 people. Estimated production per year is 6 million tons.

On August 1, BOEM is tentatively scheduled to participate in a panel discussion at the "New York Clean Energy Standard—Opportunities and Challenges" in New York, NY. Darryl Francois, Engineering and Technical Review Branch will represent BOEM on the panel discussing opportunities and challenges for clean energy in New York.

On August 2, BLM-WO staff will meet with an International Visitor Leadership Program group hosted by the University of Montana at Main Interior. The University has requested that Secretary Zinke greet the group. Timothy Fisher, BLM program management analyst from the National Conservation Landscape Program, will meet with the group to discuss the BLM's multiple use mission and priority programs.

On August 3, BLM-NV's Las Vegas Field Office will hold a land sale under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) in Las Vegas. The BLM proposes to offer for competitive sale 81.25 acres of public land in 17 parcels. In accordance with SNPLMA, funds generated by the sale will be used for projects such as the development of parks, trails, and natural areas, capital improvements on Federal lands, acquisition of environmentally sensitive land, and Lake Tahoe restoration projects.

On August 4, BOEM plans to publish the NOA for the Gulf of Mexico Geological and Geophysical Final EIS and MMPA Petition. BOEM must file the Final EIS with the Environmental Protection Agency by July 28. The Record of Decision and associated NOA must publish in the *Federal Register* no later than September 22, in order to meet the court ordered schedule designated in the settlement agreement.

On August 10, OSMRE's Western Region anticipates releasing for public comment a draft EIS for Western Energy Company's Rosebud Coal Mine Area F, located near Colstrip, MT. The proposed permit area for Area F would add 6,746 acres to the 25,576-acre surface coal mine. The mine currently employs 400 people, and produces 12.3 million tons per year.

In mid to late August, OSMRE's Western Region plans to submit the Belle Ayr Mine's Mining Plan decision documents to OSMRE headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Contura Coal West, LLC's Belle Ayr Coal Mine is a surface coal mine located in Campbell County, WY. The mine employs 259 people and produces approximately 20 million tons of coal per year.

On August 18, the Vegas to Reno off-road race will take place in NV. The race is the longest off road event in the U.S. and the course runs 550 miles, including sections on BLM-NV managed public lands.

During the week of August 21, OMB examiners are tentatively planning to visit field locations in North Dakota and Wyoming to observe BLM oil, coal, and wind energy activities; with special interest in the Bakken, Powder River Basin, and wind energy efforts in Wyoming. Participants will likely include Mike Hagan and Ben Burnett (OMB), Bill Gordon (POB), and Linda Smith (BLM-WO Budget Officer).

On August 22 – 24, BLM wild horse and burro program staff will participate in the National Wild Horse and Burro Summit in Salt Lake City, UT. Participants will discuss science, policy, resource impacts, and management options for on- and off-the-range populations. Secretary Zinke has been invited to speak. Other participants may include state partners and special interest groups.

On August 23 - 24, 2017, OSMRE's Mid-Continent Region (MCR) will hold an All-States Meeting, in Kansas City, MO. The meeting allows the MCR and its 11 states to exchange information on updates to regulations, policies, trends, technology, grants, personnel and budget issues.

On August 22, BSEE Director Scott Angelle will speak at the Deepwater Technology Symposium in New Orleans, and then hold various stakeholder meetings in the Gulf region.

In early September, OSMRE's Western Region plans to submit the Cordero Rojo Mine's Mining Plan decision documents to Headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. Cloud Peak Energy's Cordero Rojo Mine is a surface mine located in Campbell County, WY. The mine employs 383 people and produces approximately 20 million tons of coal per year.

In early September, OSMRE's Western Region plans to submit the Bridger Mine Mining Plan decision documents to Headquarters for review and approval by the ASLM. The Bridger Coal Company's Bridger Mine is an underground mine located in Sweetwater County, WY that employs 540 people. If the modification is approved, production is estimated to be 2.24 million tons per year.

On September 19, BSEE Director Scott Angelle will speak at the Louisiana Oil and Gas Association's annual meeting in Lafayette, LA.

On September 20, BSEE Director Scott Angelle will speak at the Center for Offshore Safety's Annual Forum in Houston, TX.

## **Assistant Secretary Policy, Management and Budget**

**OMB Travel.** Anna Naimark, Interior Branch Indian Affairs Examiner, is planning to travel to Arizona the week of July 24 to attend the Office of Policy Analysis Indian Economic Development Data Workshop, TIBC, and visit other BIA sites. The Office of Budget is working on details.

Craig Crutchfield, Interior Branch Chief, will travel to Oregon August 14-18 to visit FWS, NPS, and BLM sites. Details are still being finalized. Olivia Ferriter, DAS-BFPA, will accompany him on the trip.

Mike Hagan and Ben Burnett, Interior Branch Examiners, are planning to travel to Montana and North Dakota the week of August 21 to review energy programs. The Office of Budget is working on details.

**Office of Wildland Fire Meetings, July 17-19, 2017.** Office of Wildland Fire Director Bryan Rice will travel to Boise, Idaho to meet with the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals and Director of the Bureau of Land Management. Leadership will meet with the DOI Fire Directors, receive a National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group briefing, discuss the DOI Medical Standards Program, and tour the National Interagency Fire Center.

**U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting, August 7-12, 2017.** The Office of Policy Analysis (PPA), the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program, and the State of Florida are coordinating the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) biannual meeting to be held in Ft. Lauderdale, with a public Business Meeting to be held on August 11. The Governor of Florida will host the meeting and will tentatively make remarks at the Business Meeting. The theme of the meeting is "Healthy Reefs for a Healthy Economy" and the focus of discussion will be on the value of coral reefs and local actions taken to address key issues in the Florida reef tract. The meeting will include several progress reports on implementation of the USCRTF Strategy and FY16-20 Framework for Action.

**Border Security Forum, Tucson, AZ, September 2017.** A border wide leadership meeting on southwest border security and environmental protection is still expected to take place in Tucson, AZ (date TBD). Planning for possible new border security infrastructure is expected to be the

main focus of the meeting. Senior officials at DOI, CBP, U.S. Border Patrol and USDA Forest Service are expected to attend.

### **New Government Accountability Office (GAO) Audits**

**Assessing Technologies That Can Help Reduce the Agricultural Sector's Impact on Water Supplies (Job Code 102103).** Per request from Ranking Member Raul Grijalva of the House Committee on Natural Resources, and Sen Edward Markey, GAO will review: (1) technologies that reduce agriculture's demand on water supplies; (2) technologies that reduce the negative impact of agricultural runoff into water supplies; and (3) impact adopting these technologies has in areas experiencing water scarcity. The entrance with the United States Geological Survey) and the United States Bureau of Reclamation not scheduled.

### **GAO Entrance Conferences.**

**GAO DATA Act Review Entrance Conference.** The Department received notification of a GAO review that will examine the implementation of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act. GAO's objectives are to: (1) assess the completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of selected data elements submitted by agencies under the DATA Act for display on USASpending.gov or successor system, and (2) assess OMB and Treasury's progress toward addressing issues related to implementation of the DATA Act. The Department has begun receiving requests for information related to this review and is preparing the first required submission, which is due July 7, 2017. The review is expected to complete by November 8, 2017.

### **Recent Draft GAO Reports (Per GAO, distribution is highly restricted)**

**Small Business Contracting: Actions Needed to Demonstrate and Better Review Compliance with Select Requirements for Small Business Advocates (GAO-17-675).** Per request from the Chair of the House Committee on Small Business, GAO reviewed the compliance of selected Federal agencies to Section 15(k) of the Small Business Act, which requires Federal agencies with procurement powers to establish an Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to advocate for small businesses. GAO issued the draft report June 26 and is recommending those agencies (including the Department) which do not demonstrate compliance with section 15(k) requirements should comply or report with Congress on why they have not complied and seek any statutory flexibility or exceptions believed appropriate. The response is due July 24.

### **Recent Draft OIG Reports**

**Evaluation of USGS Scientific Collection Management Policy (2016-ER-057).** The OIG reviewed the current policies of the USGS for managing its scientific collections. The OIG reviewed these policies for consistency with established Department policies and compared them with those of the National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The OIG found USGS scientific collection management policies are not consistent with DOI policies as defined in the Department Manual and are not comparable to policies of the other two

bureaus. In addition, the OIG found USGS did not have a final policy on the management of its biologic specimens. The OIG issued the draft report June 21 with one recommendation to USGS. The response is due August 7.

### **Recent Final OIG Reports**

**Verification Review – Recommendations for the Report, U.S. Department of the Interior’s Underground Injection Control Activities (Report No. CR-EV-MOA-0006-2012), Report No. 2017-EAU-017.** The OIG completed a verification review June 21, 2017, of 18 of the 23 recommendations presented in its March 2014 evaluation report, “U.S. Department of the Interior’s Underground Injection Control Activities” (CR-EV-MOA-0006-2012). Based on the review, the OIG concluded 11 recommendations have been resolved and implemented. The OIG determined seven recommendations, impacting the Office of Insular Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, USBR, NPS, and FWS have not been fully implemented. The Office of Financial Management is requested to reopen these recommendations for additional remediation activities.

### **Rules and Regulations for Publication in 2017**

**(Update) AA20: Repeal of Consolidated Federal Oil & Gas and Federal & Indian Coal Valuation Reform final rule.** The Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) published the proposed rulemaking in the Federal Register on April 4, 2017, and the comment period closed May 4, 2017. We received and posted 95 public comments for the proposed rulemaking. Also, we received approximately 2,269 “standard form” public comments. We plan to publish the Repeal rule by July 14 or September 14, 2017, depending whether or not OMB chooses to review the rule. The rule is with the Office of the Solicitor for a comprehensive review.

### **Assistant Secretary for Water and Science**

The afternoon of July 24, Acting AS/WS Scott Cameron and AS/WS Advisor Ryan Nichols will host the quarterly DOI Urban Team meeting. Representatives from NPS, FWS, USGS, and Reclamation have been meeting quarterly for the last three years to share information about respective bureau work in cities to encourage collaboration and, most importantly, leveraging funding and expertise in urban areas, where it is expensive to operate. The Team will be focusing efforts and resources on four cities over the next 2-3 years: Albuquerque, San Antonio, NW Indiana area, and New York City.

The morning of July 24, the District Department of Transportation’s Green Infrastructure Director will host W&S, FWS, USGS, The Conservation Fund, American Forests, Bradley Site Design, and EPA at a green infrastructure project site visit featuring restoration and stormwater management components. This tour is part of the Anacostia Urban Waters Federal Partnership, a coalition of 14 federal agencies working collectively with local partners in 19 cities to restore urban waters and the surrounding lands.

In August, USGS and W&S will select projects for four Urban Waters Federal Partnership locations. In the 2017 budget omnibus, Congress dedicated \$717K of USGS funds for Urban

Waters-focused projects. USGS has been working with local city partners to identify high priority, water-related projects to implement.